



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6013 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46278

November 10, 2005

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 300-6-3

SUBJECT: LTP – Implementing New Enhancement Activities through the Conservation Security Program (CSP)

Purpose: Conservation Security Program (CSP) New Enhancement Activities

Expiration Date: September 30, 2006.

Action Required by: November 30, 2005

This memo is to notify District Conservationists, CSP Coordinators and Team Leaders of the process for participants in the Conservation Security Program (CSP) to take if they are interested in implementing any of the following new Enhancement Activities:

- On Farm Conservation Research, Demonstrations, or Pilot Projects;
- Implementing Watershed or Regional Resource Conservation Plans; and
- Carrying out Assessment and Evaluation Activities.

The Interim Final CSP Rule allows for the following types of enhancements:

1. Participates in an on-farm conservation research, demonstration, or pilot project as outlined in the sign-up notice; or
2. Cooperates with other producers to implement watershed or regional resource conservation plans that involve at least 75 percent of the producers in the targeted area; or
3. Carries out assessment and evaluation activities relating to practices included in the conservation stewardship plan as outlined in the sign-up notice.

During FY 2006, states may select existing contracts from the 2004 and 2005 CSP watersheds, where the participant wishes to modify their contract to include enhancement activities related to on-farm research, demonstrations, pilot projects, assessment and evaluation of implementing watershed or regional conservation plans. Where a watershed has potential participants for these new activities, the Watershed Coordinator and the affected District Conservationists will develop a brief proposal that describes who will perform what activities and what the expected outcomes of those activities in terms of technical information gained and/or environmental benefits are achieved. Each potential participant will require a separate proposal. These proposals will be submitted to Joe Williams, Programs, no later than close of business November 30, 2005. Proposals must be in NHQ no later than close of business December 2, 2005.

On farm research, demonstrations, pilots and assessments, and evaluations will all be focused on nationally defined topic areas. (Attachment "C"). Attachment "C" shows the nationally defined topic

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areas as well as some nationally defined projects that protocols have been developed. Watersheds also have the opportunity to propose projects within the nationally defined project areas.

On farm research will consist of applied research projects that fit within the nationally defined topic areas. CSP will make an enhancement payment to farmers and ranchers that participate in applied research projects that are conducted by an entity that is seeking to determine the effectiveness of a practice or treatment. The participant or the entity they are cooperating with must have the means and expertise to conduct the research, analyze the findings, and develop conclusions from the findings. The CSP enhancement payment will be made to the CSP participant and can include costs incurred for their participation in the research. The enhancement is not intended to pay for the research itself. (Attachment “A”)

Assessment and evaluation activities will consist of the collection of data, in a prescribed manner that fits within the nationally defined topic areas, for practices, management techniques or other activities a participant already has in place or agrees to install. CSP will make an enhancement payment to participants that agree to participate in an assessment and evaluation project according to the protocols set up for the project.

Demonstrations and pilots will be the installation and monitoring of projects that fit within the nationally defined topic areas. Pilots and demonstrations should be for practices or management techniques that have a proven track record of environmental benefits, but are not widely implemented by producers. CSP will make an enhancement payment to participants that agree to implement a pilot or demonstration according to the protocols set up for the project. (Attachment “B”)

Enhancement activities involve implementing a watershed or regional conservation plan are to reward participants that participate in these activities in watershed plans developed in their communities that address agricultural sources of pollution. The watershed plan must be approved and in place prior to the CSP contract modification and must meet the following criteria:

1. The watershed plan was developed by the watershed community. This would include TMDLs approved by EPA, P.L. 566 Land Treatment plans that meet the other criteria, but would not include P.L. 566 Watersheds that only include structural in-stream measures such as dams and channels.
2. The watershed plan addresses pollutants or conditions related to agricultural causes or impacts.
3. The watershed plan has treatment goals that pertain to agriculture.
4. The watershed plan has participation from at least 75% of the eligible participants in the watershed.
5. The participant agrees to actively implement or is actively implementing the practices and activities necessary to meet the goals of the plan.

If you have any questions, please contact Joe Williams at (317) 290-3200, ext. 311, or Dwayne Howard at ext. 386.

/s/

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

Attachment A – Guidance for CSP Enhancements for Assessment and Evaluation and On-Farm Research

Attachment B – Guidance for CSP Enhancements for Demonstration and Pilots

Attachment C – Enhancements for On-Farm Research, Demos, Pilots, Assessment & Evaluation Defined Topic Areas